

Congressman Mike Pence appeared on *CNBC's* "Closing Bell" to discuss the Democrat health care proposal and the Republican alternative for health care reform.

Excerpts Below:

Rep. Pence: "It just seems like once again, House Democrats are out of touch with the economic woes of millions of Americans. Look, this economy is struggling. American families are hurting. It's clear now, nearly six months on, that the stimulus bill passed this February is not working. And now immediately in the wake of having passed a massive national energy tax in the form of cap and trade, today we have unveiled a laundry list of new tax increases, taxes on jobs, taxes on individuals who can't afford health insurance, taxes on small business owners.

"You know, they talk about just a surcharge on people making over a certain amount of money. Well, most statistics show that most Americans that file that upper income level - at least half of Americans who file that level are small business owners filing as individuals. The last thing we should do in the worst recession in the last 25 years is raise taxes on small business owners in this country. We could do health care reform without raising taxes and funding a government takeover of health care."

Host: "What's the alternative, Congressman? Give us your ideas, because obviously, this is an expensive package. The money's got to come from somewhere. What's your idea?"

Rep. Pence: "I think the first idea is - let's reject the idea of a government-run insurance option as a means of having the government compete with the private sector. You know, the federal government competes with private businesses the way an alligator competes with a duck. It consumes it. And most people know that. If you have a government option, tens of millions of Americans would lose their health insurance, and millions of Americans would very likely lose their jobs as businesses faced additional costs. Move away from that idea, move toward - and I think I heard a glimmer of this in Doug [Holtz-Eakin]'s comments - move toward real reform. Republicans have long supported ideas like medical savings accounts on an expanded basis,

association health plans that would allow people to create nationwide risk pools for certain types of employees and for heavens' sake, let's also recognize the extraordinary cost of medical malpractice liability in our current health care economy.

"I met with doctors in Indiana this weekend who talked to me about, essentially, the defensive medicine actually being an extraordinary increase in cost. We should do health care reform. We should take more than two weeks to do it, which the Administration and the Democrats in Congress want to do, but first and foremost, for heaven's sake, Maria, let's not raise taxes on working Americans in the worst recession in 25 years to fund a government takeover of health care."
